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WITH
A REPLY TO QUESTIONS

RAISED BY
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Aalami Majlise
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is presenting this lucid and impressive Statement of Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal to the English-knowing and through it the whole world hopes that those who take the views of *ulema* as narrow-minded and bigoted will realize the grave nature of the mischief—both religious and cultural—that Ahmadism tends to cause to the body-politic of Islam.

KHAN MUHAMMAD

Amir

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ISLAM AND AHMADISM

[*By Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal.*]

On the appearance of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's three articles in the *Modern Review* of Calcutta I received a number of letters from Muslims of different shades of religious and political opinion. Some writers of these letters want me to further elucidate and justify the attitude of the Indian Muslims towards the Ahmadis. Others ask me what exactly I regard as the issue involved in Ahmadism. In this statement I propose first to meet these demands which I regard as perfectly legitimate, and then to answer the questions raised by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. I fear, however, that parts of this statement may not interest the Pandit, and to save his time I suggest that he may skip over such parts.

It is hardly necessary for me to say that I welcome the Pandit's interest in what I regard as one of the greatest problems of the East and perhaps of the whole world. He is, I believe, the first Nationalist Indian leader who has expressed a desire to understand the present

spiritual unrest in the world of Islam. In view of the many aspects and possible reactions of this unrest it is highly desirable that thoughtful Indian political leaders should open their mind to the real meaning of what is at the present moment agitating the heart of Islam.

I do not wish, however, to conceal the fact either from the Pandit or from any other reader of this statement that the Pandit's articles have for the moment given my mind rather a painful conflict of feelings. Knowing him to be a man of wide cultural sympathies my mind cannot but incline to the view that his desire to understand the questions he has raised is perfectly genuine ; yet the way in which he has expressed himself betrays a psychology which I find difficult to attribute to him. I am inclined to think that my statement on Qadianism—no more than a mere exposition of a religious doctrine on modern lines—has embarrassed both the Pandit and the Qadianis, perhaps because both inwardly resent, for different reasons, the prospects of Muslim political and religious solidarity particularly in India. It is obvious that the Indian Nationalist whose

political idealism has practically killed his sense for fact, is intolerant of the birth of a desire for self-determination in the heart of North-West Indian Islam. He thinks, wrongly in my opinion, that the only way to Indian Nationalism lies in a total suppression of the cultural entities of the country through the interaction of which alone India can evolve a rich and enduring culture. A nationalism achieved by such methods can mean nothing but mutual bitterness and even oppression. It is equally obvious that the Qadianis, too, feel nervous by the political awakening of the Indian Muslims, because they feel that the rise in political prestige of the Indian Muslims is sure to defeat their designs to carve out from the *Ummat* of the Arabian Prophet a new *Ummat* for the Indian Prophet. It is no small surprise to me that my effort to impress on the Indian Muslims the extreme necessity of internal cohesion in the present critical moment of their history in India ; and my warning them against the forces of disintegration, masquerading as Reformist movements, should have given the Pandit an occasion to sympathize with such forces.

However, I do not wish to pursue the

unpleasant task of analyzing the Pandit's motives. For the benefit of those who want further elucidation of the general Muslim attitude towards the Qadianis, I would quote a passage from Durant's *Story of Philosophy* which I hope will give the reader a clearer idea of the issue involved in Qadianism. Durant has in a few sentences summed up the Jewish point of view in the excommunication of the great philosopher Spinoza. The reader must not think that in quoting this passage I mean to insinuate some sort of comparison between Spinoza and the founder of Ahmadism. The distance between them, both in point of intellect and character, is simply tremendous. The "God-intoxicated" Spinoza never claimed that he was the centre of a new organization and that all the Jews who did not believe in him were outside the pale of Judaism. Durant's passage, therefore, applies with much greater force to the attitude of Muslims towards Qadianism than to the attitude of the Jews towards the excommunication of Spinoza. The passage is as follows :

Furthermore, religious unanimity seemed to the elders their sole means of preserving the

little Jewish group in Amsterdam from disintegration, and almost the last means of preserving the unity, and so ensuring the survival, of the scattered Jews of the world. If they had had their own state, their own civil law, their own establishments of secular force and power, to compel internal cohesion and external respect, they might have been more tolerant but their religion was to them their patriotism as well as their faith ; the synagogue was their centre of social and political life as well as of ritual and worship ; and the Bible whose veracity Spinoza had impugned was the "Portable Fatherland" of their people ; under the circumstances they thought heresy was treason, and toleration suicide

Situated as the Jews were – a minority community in Amsterdam — they were perfectly justified in regarding Spinoza as a disintegrating factor threatening the dissolution of their community. Similarly the Indian Muslims are right in regarding the Qadiani Movement, which declares the entire world of Islam as *Kafir* and socially boycotts them, to be far more dangerous to the collective life of Islam in India than the metaphysics of Spinoza to the collective life of the Jews. The Indian Muslim, I believe, instinctively realizes the peculiar nature of the circumstances in which he is placed in India and is natur-

ally much more sensitive to the forces of disintegration than the Muslims of any other country. This instinctive perception of the average Muslim is in my opinion absolutely correct and has, I have no doubt, a much deeper foundation in the conscience of Indian Islam. Those who talk of toleration in a matter like this are extremely careless in using the word toleration which I fear they do not understand at all. The spirit of toleration may arise from very different attitudes of the mind of man. As Gibbon would say: There is the toleration of the philospher to whom all religions are equally true; of the historian to whom all are equally false; and of the politician to whom all are equally useful. There is the toleration of the man who tolerates other modes of thought and behaviour because he has himself grown absolutely indifferent to all modes of thought and behaviour. There is the toleration of the weak man who, on account of sheer weakness, must pocket all kinds of insults heaped on things or persons whom he holds dear. It is obvious that these types of tolerance have no ethical value. On the other hand they unmistakably reveal the

spiritual impoverishment of the man who practises them. True toleration is begotten of intellectual breadth and spiritual expansion. It is the toleration of the spiritually powerful man who, while jealous of the frontiers of his own faith, can tolerate and even appreciate all forms of faith other than his own. Of this type of toleration the true Muslim alone is capable. His own faith is synthetic and for this reason he can easily find grounds of sympathy and appreciation in other faiths. Our great Indian poet, Amir Khusro, beautifully brings out the essence of this type of toleration in the story of an idol-worshipper. After giving an account of his intense attachment to his idols the poet addresses his Muslim readers as follows:

اے که زبُت طعنه به هندو بری
هم زوے آموز پرستش گری

Only a true lover of God can appreciate the value of devotion even though it is directed to gods in which he himself does not believe. The folly of our preachers of toleration consists in describing the attitude of the man who is jealous of the boundaries of his own faith as one of intolerance. They

wrongly consider this attitude as a sign of moral inferiority. They do not understand that the value of his attitude is essentially biological. Where the members of a group feel, either instinctively or on the basis of rational argument, that the corporate life of the social organism to which they belong is in danger their defensive attitude must be appraised in reference mainly to a biological criterion. Every thought or deed in this connection must be judged by the life-value that it may possess. The question in this case is not whether the attitude of an individual or community towards the man who is declared to be a heretic is morally good or bad. The question is whether it is life-giving or life-destroying. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru seems to think that a society founded on religious principles necessitates the institution of Inquisition. This is indeed true of the history of Christianity; but the history of Islam, contrary to the Pandit's logic, shows that during the last thirteen hundred years of the life of Islam, the institution of Inquisition has been absolutely unknown in Muslim countries. The Quran expressly prohibits such an institution. "Do not seek out the

shortcomings of others and carry not tales against your brethren." Indeed the Pandit will find from the history of Islam that the Jews and Christians, fleeing from religious persecution in their own lands, always found shelter in the lands of Islam. The two propositions on which the conceptual structure of Islam is based are so simple that it makes heresy in the sense of turning the heretic outside the fold of Islam almost impossible. It is true that when a person declared to be holding heretical doctrines threatens the existing social order an independent Muslim state will certainly take action; but in such a case the action of the state will be determined more by political considerations than by purely religious ones. I can very well realize that a man like the Pandit, who is born and brought up in a society which has no well-defined boundaries and consequently no internal cohesion, finds it difficult to conceive that a religious society can live and prosper without state-appointed commissions of enquiry into the beliefs of the people. This is quite clear from the passage which he quotes from Cardinal Newman and wonders how far I would

accept the application of the Cardinal's dictum to Islam. Let me tell him that there is a tremendous difference between the inner structure of Islam and Catholicism wherein the complexity, the ultra-rational character and the number of dogmas has, as the history of Christianity shows, always fostered possibilities of fresh heretical interpretations. The simple faith of Muhammad is based on two propositions — that God is One, and that Muhammad is the last of the line of those holy men who have appeared from time to time in all countries and in all ages to guide mankind to the right ways of living. If, as some Christian writers think, a dogma must be defined as an ultra-rational proposition which for the purpose of securing religious solidarity must be assented to without any understanding of its metaphysical import, then these two simple propositions of Islam cannot be described even as dogmas ; for both of them are supported by the experience of mankind and are fairly amenable to rational argument. The question of a heresy, which needs the verdict whether the author of it is within or without the fold can arise, in the case of a religious society founded on

such simple propositions, only when the heretic rejects both or either of these propositions. Such heresy must be and has been rare in the history of Islam which, while jealous of its frontiers, permits freedom of interpretation within these frontiers. And since the phenomenon of the kind of heresy which affects the boundaries of Islam has been rare in the history of Islam, the feeling of the average Muslim is naturally intense when a revolt of this kind arises. That is why the feeling of Muslim Persia was so intense against the Bahais. That is why the feeling of the Indian Muslims is so intense against the Qadianis.

It is true that mutual accusations of heresy for differences in minor points of law and theology among Muslim religious sects have been rather common. In this indiscriminate use of the word *kufr* both for minor theological points of difference as well as for the extreme cases of heresy which involve the excommunication of the heretic, some present-day educated Muslims who possess practically no knowledge of the history of Muslim theological disputes, see a sign of social and political

disintegration of the Muslim community. This, however, is an entirely wrong notion. The history of Muslim Theology shows that mutual accusation of heresy on minor points of difference has, far from working as a disruptive force, actually given an impetus to synthetic theological thought. "When we read the history of development of Muhammaden Law", says Prof. Hurgrounje, "we find that, on the one hand, the doctors of every age, on the slightest stimulus, condemn one another to the point of mutual accusations of heresy; and, on the other hand, the very same people with greater and greater unity of purpose try to reconcile the similar quarrels of their predecessors." The student of Muslim Theology knows that among Muslim legists this kind of heresy is technically known as "heresy below heresy," *i.e.*, the kind of heresy which does not involve the excommunication of the culprit. It may be admitted, however that in the hands of *mullahs* whose intellectual laziness takes all oppositions of theological thought as absolute and is consequently blind to the unity in difference, this minor heresy may become a source of great mischief. This

mischief can be remedied only by giving to the students of our theological schools a clearer vision of the synthetic spirit of Islam, and by re-initiating them into the function of logical contradiction as a principle of movement in theological dialectic. The question of what may be called major heresy arises only when the teaching of a thinker or a reformer affects the frontiers of the faith of Islam. Unfortunately this question does arise in connection with the teachings of Qadianism. It must be pointed out here that the Ahmadi movement is divided into two camps known as the Qadianis and the Lahoris. The former openly declare the founder to be a full prophet ; the latter, either by conviction or policy, have found it advisable to preach an apparently toned down Qadianism. However, the question whether the founder of Ahmadism was prophet the denial of whose mission entails what I call the "major heresy" is a matter of dispute between the two sections. It is unnecessary for my purposes to judge the merits of this domestic controversy of the Ahmadis. I believe, for reasons to be explained presently, that the idea of a full prophet whose

denial entails the denier's excommunication from Islam is essential to Ahmadism ; and that the present head of the Qadianis is far more consistent with the spirit of the movement than the Imam of the Lahoris.

The cultural value of the idea of Finality in Islam I have fully explained elsewhere. Its meaning is simple : No spiritual surrender to any human being after Muhammad who emancipated his followers by giving them a law which is realizable as arising from the very core of human conscience. Theologically the doctrine is that : The Socio-political organization called "Islam" is perfect and eternal. No revelation the denial of which entails heresy is possible after Muhammad. He who claims such a revelation is a traitor to Islam. Since the Qadianis believe the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement to be the bearer of such a revelation, they declare that the entire world of Islam is infidel. The founder's own argument, quite worthy of a mediæval theologian, is that the spirituality of the Holy Prophet of Islam must be regarded as imperfect if it is not creative of another Prophet. He claims his

own Prophethood to be an evidence of the Prophet-rearing power of the spirituality of the Holy Prophet of Islam. But if you further ask him whether the spirituality of Muhammad is capable of rearing more prophets than one, his answer is "No." This virtually amounts to saying : "Muhammad is not the last Prophet ; I am the last." Far from understanding the cultural value of the Islamic idea of finality in the history of mankind generally and of Asia especially, he thinks that finality in the sense that no follower of Muhammad can ever reach the status of Prophethood is a mark of imperfection in Muhammad's Prophethood. As I read the psychology of his mind he, in the interest of his own claim to Prophethood, avails himself of what he describes as the creative spirituality of the Holy Prophet of Islam and at the same time deprives the Holy Prophet of his 'finality' by limiting the creative capacity of his spirituality to the rearing of only one prophet, *i.e.*, the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement. In this way does the new prophet quietly steal away the 'finality' of one whom he claims to be his spiritual progenitor.

He claims to be a '*buruz*' (بروز) of the

Holy Prophet of Islam insinuating thereby that, being a ' *buruz* ' of him, his ' finality' is virtually the ' finality ' of Muhammad ; and that this view of the matter, therefore, does not violate the ' finality ' of the Holy Prophet. In identifying the two finalities, his own and that of the Holy Prophet, he conveniently loses sight of the temporal meaning of the idea of Finality. It is, however, obvious that the word ' *buruz* ' in the sense even of complete likeness, cannot help him at all ; for the ' *buruz*, ' must always remain the other of its original. Only in the sense of reincarnation a ' *buruz* ' becomes identical with the original. Thus if we take the word ' *buruz* ' to mean " like in spiritual qualities" the argument remains ineffective ; if, on the other hand, we take it to mean reincarnation of the original in the Aryan sense of the word, the argument becomes plausible ; but its author turns out to be only a Magian in disguise.

It is further claimed on the authority of the great Muslim Mystic, Muhyuddin Ibn-i-Arabi of Spain, that it is possible for a Muslim saint to attain, in his spiritual evolution, to the kind of experience charac-

teristic of the prophetic consciousness. I personally believe this view of the Sheikh Muhyuddin Ibn-i-Arabi to be psychologically unsound; but assuming it to be correct the Qadiani argument is based on a complete misunderstanding of his exact position. The Sheikh regards it as a purely private achievement which does not, and in the nature of things cannot, entitle such a saint to declare that all those who do not believe in him are outside the pale of Islam. Indeed, from the Sheikh's point of view, there may be more than one saint, living in the same age or country, who may attain to prophetic consciousness. The point to be seized is that while it is psychologically possible for a saint to attain to prophetic experience, his experience will have no socio-political significance making him the centre of a new organization and entitling him to declare this organization to be the criterion of the faith or disbelief of the followers of Muhammad.

Leaving his mystical psychology aside I am convinced from a careful study of the relevant passages of the *Futuhat* that the great Spanish mystic is as firm a believer in the Finality of Muhammad as any orthodox

Muslim. And if he had seen in his mystical vision that one day in the East some Indian amateurs in Sufism would seek to destroy the Holy Prophet's finality under cover of his mystical psychology, he would have certainly anticipated the Indian Ulema in warning the Muslims of the world against such traitors to Islam.

II

Coming now to the essence of Ahmadism. A discussion of its sources and of the way in which pre-Islamic Magian ideas have, through the channels of Islamic mysticism, worked on the mind of its author would be extremely interesting from the standpoint of comparative religion. It is, however, impossible for me to undertake this discussion here. Suffice it to say that the real nature of Ahmadism is hidden behind the mist of mediæval mysticism and theology. The Indian Ulema, therefore, took it to be a purely theological movement and came out with theological weapons to deal with it. I believe, however, that this was not the proper method of dealing with the movement; and that the success of the Ulema was, therefore, only partial. A careful psychological analysis of the

revelations of the founder would perhaps be an effective method of dissecting the inner life of his personality. In this connection I may mention Maulvi Manzoor Elahi's collection of the founder's revelations which offers rich and varied material for psychological research. In my opinion the book provides a key to the character and personality of the founder; and I do hope that one day some young student of modern psychology will take it up for serious study. If he takes the Quran for his criterion, as he must for reasons which cannot be explained here, and extends his study to a comparative examination of the experiences of the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement and contemporary non-Muslim mystics, such as Ram Krishna of Bengal, he is sure to meet more than one surprise as to the essential character of the experience on the basis of which prophethood is claimed for the originator of Ahmadism.

Another equally effective and more fruitful method, from the standpoint of the plain man, is to understand the real content of Ahmadism in the light of the history of Muslim theological thought in India at least

from the year 1799. The year 1799 is extremely important in the history of the world of Islam. In this year fell Tippu; and his fall meant the extinguishment of Muslim hopes for political prestige in India. In the same year was fought the battle of Navarneo which saw the destruction of the Turkish fleet. Prophetic were the words of the author of the chronogram of Tippu's fall which visitors of Serangapatam find engraved on the wall of Tippu's mausoleum: "Gone is the glory of Ind as well as of Roum." Thus in the year 1799 the political decay of Islam in Asia reached its climax. But just as out of the humiliation of Germany on the day of Jena arose the modern German nation, it may be said with equal truth that out of the political humiliation of Islam in the year 1799 arose modern Islam and her problems. This point I shall explain in the sequel. For the present I want to draw the reader's attention to some of the questions which have arisen in Muslim India since the fall of Tippu and the development of European imperialism in Asia.

Does the idea of Caliphate in Islam embody a religious institution? How are

the Indian Muslims and for the matter of that all Muslims outside the Turkish Empire related to the Turkish Caliphate? Is India *Dar-ul-Harb* or *Dar-ul-Islam*? What is the real meaning of the doctrine of Jihad in Islam? What is the meaning of the expression "From amongst you" in the Quranic verse: "Obey God, obey the Prophet and the masters of the affair, *i.e.*, rulers, from amongst you"? What is the character of the traditions of the Prophet foretelling the advent of Imam Mehdi? These questions and some others which arose subsequently were, for obvious reasons, questions for Indian Muslims only. European imperialism, however, which was then rapidly penetrating the world of Islam, was also intimately interested in them. The controversies which these questions created form a most interesting chapter in the history of Islam in India. The story is a long one and is still waiting for a powerful pen. Muslim politicians whose eyes were mainly fixed on the realities of the situation succeeded in winning over a section of the ulema to adopt a line of theological argument which as they thought suited the situation; but it was not easy to conquer by

mere logic the beliefs which had ruled for centuries the conscience of the masses of Islam in India. In such a situation logic can either proceed on the ground of political expediency or on the lines of a fresh orientation of texts and traditions. In either case the argument will fail to appeal to the masses. To the intensely religious masses of Islam only one thing can make a conclusive appeal, and that is Divine Authority. For an effective eradication of orthodox beliefs it was found necessary to find a revelational basis for a politically suitable orientation of theological doctrines involved in the questions mentioned above. This revelational basis is provided by Ahmadism. And the Ahmadis themselves claim this to be the greatest service rendered by them to British imperialism. The prophetic claim to a revelational basis for theological views of a political significance amounts to declaring that those who do not accept the claimant's views are infidels of the first water and destined for the flames of Hell. As I understand the significance of the movement, the Ahmadi belief that Christ died the death of an ordinary mortal, and that his second advent means only the

advent of a person who is spiritually 'like unto him,' give the movement some sort of a rational appearance; but they are not really essential to the spirit of the movement. In my opinion they are only preliminary steps towards the idea of full prophethood which alone can serve the purposes of the movement eventually brought into being by new political forces. In primitive countries it is not logic but authority that appeals. Given a sufficient amount of ignorance, credulity which strangely enough sometimes co-exists with good intelligence, and a person sufficiently audacious to declare himself a recipient of Divine revelation whose denial would entail eternal damnation, it is easy, in a subject Muslim country, to invent a political theology and to build a community whose creed is political servility. And in the Punjab even an ill-woven net of vague theological expressions can easily capture the innocent peasant who has been for centuries exposed to all kinds of exploitation. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru advises the orthodox of all religions to unite and thus to delay the coming of what he conceives to be Indian Nationalism. This ironical advice assumes

that Ahmadism is a reform movement; he does not know that as far as Islam in India is concerned Ahmadism involves both religious and political issues of the highest importance. As I have explained above, the function of Ahmadism in the history of Muslim religious thought is to furnish a revelational basis for India's present political subjugation. Leaving aside the purely religious issues, on the ground of political issues alone it does not lie in the mouth of a man like Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru to accuse Indian Muslims of reactionary conservatism. I have no doubt that if he had grasped the real nature of Ahmadism he would have very much appreciated the attitude of Indian Muslims towards a religious movement which claims Divine authority for the woes of India.

Thus the reader will see that the pallor of Ahmadism which we find on the cheeks of Indian Islam to-day is not an abrupt phenomenon in the history of Muslim religious thought in India. The ideas which eventually shaped themselves in the form of this movement became prominent in theological discussions long before the founder of Ahmadism was born. Nor do

I mean to insinuate that the founder of Ahmadism and his companions deliberately planned their programme. I dare say the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement did hear a voice; but whether this voice came from the God of Life and Power or arose out of the spiritual impoverishment of the people must depend upon the nature of the movement which it has created and the kind of thought and emotion which it has given to those who have listened to it. The reader must not think that I am using metaphorical language. The life-history of nations shows that when the tide of life in a people begins to ebb, decadence itself becomes a source of inspiration, inspiring their poets, philosophers, saints, statesmen and turning them into a class of apostles whose sole ministry is to glorify, by the force of a seductive art or logic, all that is ignoble and ugly in the life of their people. These apostles unconsciously clothe despair in the glittering garment of hope, undermine the traditional values of conduct and thus destroy the spiritual virility of those who happen to be their victims One can only imagine the rotten state of a people's will who are, on

the basis of Divine authority, made to accept their political environment as final. Thus all the actors who participated in the drama of Ahmadism were, I think, only innocent instruments in the hands of decadence. A similar drama had already been acted in Persia ; but it did not lead, and could not have led, to the religious and political issues which Ahmadism has created for Islam in India. Russia offered tolerance to Babism and allowed the Babis to open their first missionary centre in *Ishqabad*. England showed Ahmadis the same tolerance in allowing them to open their first missionary centre in *Woking*. Whether Russia and England showed this tolerance on the ground of imperial expediency or pure broadmindedness is difficult for us to decide. This much is absolutely clear that this tolerance has created difficult problems for Islam in Asia. In view of the structure of Islam, as I understand it, I have not the least doubt in my mind that Islam will emerge purer out of the difficulties thus created for her. Times are changing. Things in India have already taken a new turn. The new spirit of democracy which is coming to India is sure to disillusion the

Ahmadis and to convince them of the absolute futility of their theological inventions.

Nor will Islam tolerate any revival of mediæval mysticism which has already robbed its followers of their healthy instincts and given them only obscure thinking in return. It has, during the course of the past centuries, absorbed the best minds of Islam leaving the affairs of the state to mere mediocrities. Modern Islam cannot afford to repeat the experiment. Nor can it tolerate a repetition of the Punjab experiment of keeping Muslims occupied for half a century in theological problems which had absolutely no bearing on life. Islam has already passed into the broad daylight of fresh thought and experience ; and no saint or prophet can bring it back to the fogs of mediæval mysticism.

III

Let me now turn to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru's questions. I fear the Pandit's articles reveal practically no acquaintance with Islam or its religious history during the 19th century. Nor does he seem to

have read what I have already written on the subject of his questions. It is not possible for me to reproduce here all that I have written before. Nor is it possible to write here a religious history of Islam in the 19th century without which a thorough understanding of the present situation in the world of Islam is impossible. Hundreds of books and articles have been written on Turkey and modern Islam. I have read most of this literature and probably the Pandit has also read it. I assure him, however, that not one of these writers understands the nature of the effect or of the cause that has brought about that effect. It is, therefore, necessary to briefly indicate the main currents of Muslim thought in Asia during the 19th century.

I have said above that in the year 1799 the political decay of Islam reached its climax. There can, however, be no greater testimony to the inner vitality of Islam than the fact that it practically took no time to realize its position in the world. During the 19th century were born Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in India, Syed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani in Afghanistan and Mufti Alam Jan in Russia. These men were probably-

inspired by Mohammad Ibn-i-Abdul Wahab who was born in Najd in 1700, the founder of the so-called Wahabi movement which may fitly be described as the first throb of life in modern Islam. The influence of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan remained on the whole confined to India. It is probable, however, that he was the first modern Muslim to catch a glimpse of the positive character of the age which was coming. The remedy for the ills of Islam proposed by him, as by Mufti Alam Jan in Russia, was modern education. But the real greatness of the man consists in the fact that he was the first Indian Muslim who felt the need of a fresh orientation of Islam and worked for it. We may differ from his religious views, but there can be no denying the fact that his sensitive soul was the first to react to the modern age.

The extreme conservatism of Indian Muslims which had lost its hold on the realities of life failed to see the real meaning of the religious attitude of Syed Ahmad Khan. In the North-West of India, a country more primitive and more saint-ridden than the rest of India, the Syed's movement was

soon followed by the reaction of Ahmadism —a strange mixture of Semetic and Aryan mysticism with whom spiritual revival consists not in the purification of the individual's inner life according to the principles of the old Islamic Sufiism, but in satisfying the expectant attitude of the masses by providing a 'Promised' Messiah. The function of this 'Promised Messiah' is not to extricate the individual from an enervating present but to make him slavishly surrender his ego to its dictates. This reaction carries within itself a very subtle contradiction. It retains the discipline of Islam, but destroys the will which that discipline was intended to fortify.

Maulana Syed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani was a man of a different stamp. Strange are the ways of Providence ! One of the most advanced Muslims of our time, both in religious thought and action, was born in Afghanistan ! A perfect master of nearly all the Muslim languages of the world and endowed with the most winning eloquence, his restless soul migrated from one Muslim country to another influencing some of the most prominent men in Persia, Egypt and Turkey. Some of the greatest

theologians of our times such as Mufti Muhammad Abduhu, and some of the men of the younger generation who later became political leaders, such as Zaghlul Pasha of Egypt, were his disciples. He wrote little, spoke much and thereby tranformed into miniature Jamal-ud-Dins all those who came into contact with him. He never claimed to be a prophet or a renewer ; yet no man in our time has stirred the soul of Islam more deeply than he. His spirit is still working in the world of Islam and nobody knows where it will end.

It may, however, be asked, what exactly was the objective of these great Muslims ? The answer is that they found the world of Islam ruled by three main forces and they concentrated their whole energy on creating a revolt against these forces :

1. *Mullaism*.—The Ulema have always been a source of great strength to Islam. But during the course of centuries, especially since the destruction of Baghdad, they became extremely conservative and would not allow any freedom of *Ijtihad*, *i.e.*, the forming of independent judgment in matters of law. The Wahabi movement

which was a source of inspiration to the 19th century Muslim reformers was really a revolt against this rigidity of the Ulema. Thus the first objective of the 19th century Muslim reformers was a fresh orientation of the faith and a freedom to reinterpret the law in the light of advancing experience.

2. *Mysticism.*—The masses of Islam were swayed by the kind of mysticism which blinked actualities, enervated the people and kept them steeped in all kinds of superstition. From its high estate as a force of spiritual education, mysticism had fallen down to a mere means of exploiting the ignorance and the credulity of the people. It gradually and invisibly unnerved the will of Islam and softened it to the extent of seeking relief from the rigorous discipline of the law of Islam. The 19th century reformers rose in revolt against this mysticism and called Muslims to the broad daylight of the modern world. Not that they were materialists. Their mission was to open the eyes of the Muslims to the spirit of Islam which aimed at the conquest of matter and not flight from it.

3. *Muslim Kings* whose gaze was

solely fixed on their own dynastic interests and who, so long as these were protected, did not hesitate to sell their countries to the highest bidder. To prepare the masses of Muslims for a revolt against such a state of things in the world of Islam was the special mission of Syed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani.

It is not possible here to give a detailed account of the transformation which these reformers brought about in the world of Muslim thought and feeling. One thing, however, is clear. They prepared to a great extent the ground for another set of men, *i.e.*, Zaghlul Pasha, Mustafa Kamal and Raza Shah. The reformers interpreted, argued and explained; but the set of men who came after them, although inferior in academic learning are men who, relying on their healthy instincts, had the courage to rush into sun-lit space and do, even by force, what the new conditions of life demanded. Such men are liable to make mistakes; but the history of nations shows that even their mistakes have sometimes borne good fruit. In them it is not logic but life that struggles restless to solve its own

problems. It may be pointed out here that Syed Ahmad Khan, Syed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani and hundreds of the latter's disciples in Muslim countries were not westernized Muslims. They were men who had sat on their knees before the Mullahs of the old school and had breathed the very intellectual and spiritual atmosphere which they later sought to reconstruct. Pressure of modern ideas may be admitted; but the history thus briefly indicated above clearly shows that the upheaval which has come to Turkey and which is likely, sooner or later, to come to other Muslim countries, is almost wholly determined by the forces within. It is only the superficial observer of the modern world of Islam who thinks that the present crisis in the world of Islam is wholly due to the working of alien forces.

Has then the world of Islam outside India or especially Turkey abandoned Islam? Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru thinks that Turkey had ceased to be a Muslim country. He does not seem to realize that the question whether a person or a community has ceased to be a member of Islam is, from the Muslim point of view, a purely legal question and must be

decided in view of the structural principles of Islam. As long as a person is loyal to the two basic principles of Islam, *i.e.*, the Unity of God and Finality of the Holy Prophet, not even the strictest Mullah can turn him outside the pale of Islam even though his interpretations of the Law or of the text of the Quran are believed to be erroneous. But perhaps Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru has in his mind the supposed or real innovations which the Ata-Turk has introduced. Let us for a moment examine these. Is it the development of a general materialist outlook in Turkey which seems inimical to Islam? Islam has had too much of renunciation; it is time for the Muslims to look to realities. Materialism is a bad weapon against religion; but it is quite an effective one against mullah-craft and sufi-craft which deliberately mystify the people with a view to exploit their ignorance and credulity. The spirit of Islam is not afraid of its contact with matter. Indeed the Quran says: "Forget not thy share in the World." It is difficult for a non-Muslim to understand that, considering the history of the Muslim world during the last few centuries, the

progress of a materialist outlook is only a form of self-realization. Is it then the abolition of the old dress or the introduction of the Latin Script? Islam as a religion has no country; as a society it has no specific language, no specific dress. Even the recitation of the Quran in Turkish is not without some precedent in Muslim history. Personally I regard it as a serious error of judgment; for the modern student of the Arabic language and literature knows full well that the only non-European language which has a future is Arabic. But the reports are that the Turks have already abandoned the Vernacular recitation of the Quran. Is it then the abolition of Polygamy or the licentiate Ulema? According to the Law of Islam the Amir of a Muslim State has the power to revoke the "permissions" of the law if he is convinced that they tend to cause social corruption. As to the licentiate Ulema I would certainly introduce it in Muslim India if I had the power to do so. To the inventions of the myth-making Mullah is largely due the stupidity of the average Muslim. In excluding him from the religious life of the people the Ata-Turk has done what would have delighted

the heart of an Ibn-i-Taimiyyia or a Shah Wali Ullah. There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet reported in the '*Mishkat*' to the effect that only the Amir of the Muslim State and the person or persons appointed by him are entitled to preach to the people. I do not know whether the Ata-Turk ever knew of this tradition; yet it is striking how the light of his Islamic conscience has illumined the zone of his action in this important matter. The adoption of the Swiss Code with its rule of inheritance is certainly a serious error which has arisen out of the youthful zeal for reform excusable in a people furiously desiring to go ahead. The joy of emancipation from the fetters of a long-standing priest-craft sometimes drives a people to untried courses of action. But Turkey as well as the rest of the world of Islam have yet to realize the hitherto unrevealed economic aspects of the Islamic law of inheritance which Von Kremer describes as the "Supremely original branch of Muslim law". Is it the abolition of the Caliphate or the separation of Church and State? In its essence Islam is not Imperialism. In the abolition of the Caliphate which since the days of

Omayyads had practically become a kind of Empire it is only the spirit of Islam that has worked out through the Ata-Turk. In order to understand the Turkish *Ijtihad* in the matter of the Caliphate we cannot but seek the guidance of Ibn-i-Khaldun—the great philosophical historian of Islam, and the father of modern history. I can do no better than to quote here a passage from my *Reconstruction* :

Ibn-i-Khaldun in his famous Prolegomena mentions three distinct views of the idea of Universal Caliphate in Islam : (1) That Universal Imamate is a Divine institution and is consequently indispensable. (2) That it is merely a matter of expediency. (3) That there is no need of such an institution. The last view was taken by the Khawarij, the early Republicans of Islam, It seems that modern Turkey has shifted from the first to the second view, *i.e.*, to the view of the Mutazila who regarded Universal Imamate as a matter of expediency only. The Turks argue that in our political thinking we must be guided by our past political experience which points unmistakably to the fact that the idea of universal Imamate has failed in practice. It was a workable idea when the Empire of Islam was intact. Since the break-up of this Empire independent units have arisen. The idea has ceased to be operative and cannot work as a living factor in the organization of modern Islam.

Nor is the idea of separation of Church and State alien to Islam. The doctrine of the Major Occultation of the Imam in a sense effected this separation long ago in Shia Persia. The Islamic idea of the division of the religious and political functions of the State must not be confounded with the European idea of the separation of Church and State. The former is only a division of functions as is clear from the gradual creation in the Muslim State of the offices of Shaikh-ul-Islam and Ministers ; the latter is based on the metaphysical dualism of spirit and matter. Christianity began as an order of Monks having nothing to do with the affairs of the world ; Islam was, from the very beginning, a civil society with laws civil in their nature though believed to be revelational in origin. The metaphysical dualism on which the European idea is based has borne bitter fruit among Western nations. Many years ago a book was written in America called *If Christ came to Chicago*. In reviewing this book an American author says :

The lesson to be learned from Mr. Stead's book is that the great evils from which humanity is suffering to-day are evils that can be

handled only by religious sentiments ; that the handling of those evils has been in the great part surrendered to the State ; that the State has itself been delivered over to corrupt political machines ; that such machines are not only unwilling, but unable, to deal with those evils: and that nothing but a religious awakening of the citizens to their public duties can save countless millions from misery, and the State itself from degradation.

In the history of Muslim political experience the separation has meant only a separation of functions, not of ideas. It cannot be maintained that in Muslim countries the separation of Church and State means the freedom of Muslim legislative activity from the conscience of the people which has for centuries been trained and developed by the spirituality of Islam. Experience alone will show how the idea will work in modern Turkey. We can only hope that it will not be productive of the evils which it has produced in Europe and America.

I have briefly discussed the above innovations more for the sake of the Muslim reader than for Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. The innovation specifically mentioned hy the Pandit is the adoption by the Turks and Persians of racial and nationalist ideals.

He seems to think that the adoption of such ideals means the abandonment of Islam by Turkey and Persia. The student of history knows very well that Islam was born at a time when the old principles of human unification, such as blood relationship and throne-culture were failing. It, therefore, finds the principle of human unification not in the blood and bones but in the mind of man. Indeed its social message to mankind is : " Deracialize yourself or perish by internecine war." It is no exaggeration to say that Islam looks askance at Nature's race-building plans and creates, by means of its peculiar institutions, an outlook which would counteract the race-building forces of nature. In the direction of human domestication it has done in one thousand years far more important work than Christianity and Budhism ever did in two thousand years or more. It is no less than a miracle that an Indian Muslim finds himself at home in Morocco in spite of the disparity of race and language. Yet it cannot be said that Islam is totally opposed to race. Its history shows that in social reform it relies mainly on its scheme for gradual deracialization and proceeds on the

lines of least resistance. "Verily," says the Quran, "We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes so that you may be identified; but the best among you in the eye of God is he who is the purest in life." Considering the mightiness of the problem of race and the amount of time which the deracialization of mankind must necessarily take, the attitude of Islam towards the problem of race, *i.e.*, stooping to conquer without itself becoming a race-making factor, is the only rational and workable attitude. There is a remarkable passage in Sir Arthur Keith's little book, *The Problem of Race*, which is worth quoting here:

> And now man is awakening to the fact that Nature's primary end--race building--is incompatible with the necessities of the modern economic world and is asking himself: What must I do? Bring race-building as practised hitherto by nature to an end and have eternal peace? Or permit Nature to pursue her old course and have, as a necessary consequence—War? Man has to choose the one course or the other. There is no intermediate course possible.

It is, therefore, clear that if the Ata-Turk is inspired by Pan-Turanianism he is going not so much against the spirit of Islam as against the spirit of the times. And if he is a believer in the absoluteness of

races, he is sure to be defeated by the spirit of modern times which is wholly in keeping with the spirit of Islam. Personally, however, I do not think that the Ata-Turk is inspired by Pan-Turanianism, as I believe his Pan-Turanianism is only a political retort to Pan-Slavonism, or Pan-Germanism or Pan-Anglo-Saxonism.

If the meaning of the above paragraph is well understood it is not difficult to see the attitude of Islam towards nationalist ideals. Nationalism in the sense of love of one's country and even readiness to die for its honour is a part of the Muslims' faith; it comes into conflict with Islam only when it begins to play the role of a political concept and claims to be a principle of human solidarity demanding that Islam should recede to the background of a mere private opinion and cease to be a living factor in the national life. In Turkey, Persia, Egypt and other Muslim countries it will never become a problem. In these countries Muslims constitue an overwhelming majority and their minorities, *i.e.*, Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians, according to the law of Islam, are either "People of the Book" or "like the People of the Book"

with whom the law of Islam allows free social relations including matrimonial alliances. It becomes a problem for Muslims only in countries where they happen to be in a minority, and nationalism demands their complete self-effacement. In majority countries Islam accommodates nationalism; for there Islam and nationalism are practically identical ; in minority countries it is justified in seeking self-determination as a cultural unit. In either case, it is thoroughly consistent with itself.

The above paragraphs briefly sum up the exact situation in the world of Islam to-day. If this is properly understood it will become clear that the fundamentals of Islamic solidarity are not any way shaken by any external or internal forces. The solidarity of Islam, as I have explained before, consists in a uniform belief in the two structural principles of Islam supplemented by the five well-known "practices of the faith." These are the first essentials of Islamic solidarity which has, in this sense existed ever since the days of the Holy Prophet until it was recently disturbed by the Bahais in Persia and the Qadianis in India. It is a guarantee for a

practically uniform spiritual atmosphere in the world of Islam. It facilitates the political combination of Muslim states, which combination may either assume the form of a world-state (ideal) or of a league of Muslim states, or of a number of independent states whose pacts and alliances are determined by purely economic and political considerations. That is how the conceptual structure of this simple faith is related to the process of time. The profundity of this relation can be understood only in the light of certain verses of the Quran which it is not possible to explain here without drifting away from the point immediately before us. Politically, then, the solidarity of Islam is shaken only when Muslim states war on one another ; religiously it is shaken only when Muslims rebel against any of the basic beliefs and practices of the Faith. It is in the interest of this eternal solidarity that Islam cannot tolerate any rebellious group within its fold. Outside the fold such a group is entitled to as much toleration as the followers of any other faith. It appears to me that at the present moment Islam is passing through a period of transition. It is shifting from

one form of political solidarity to some other form which the forces of history have yet to determine. Events are so rapidly moving in the modern world that it is almost impossible to make a prediction. As to what will be the attitude towards non-Muslims of a politically united Islam, if such a thing ever comes, is a question which history alone can answer. All that I can say is that, lying mid-way between Asia and Europe and being a synthesis of Eastern and Western outlook on life, Islam ought to act as a kind of intermediary between the East and the West. But what if the follies of Europe create an irreconcilable Islam? As things are developing in Europe from day to day they demand a radical transformation of Europe's attitude towards Islam. We can only hope that political vision will not allow itself to be obscured by the dictates of imperial ambition or economic exploitation. In so far as India is concerned I can say with perfect confidence that the Muslims of India will not submit to any kind of political idealism which would seek to annihilate their cultural entity. Sure of this they may be trusted to know how to reconcile the claims

of religion and patriotism.

One word about His Highness the Agha Khan. What has led Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru to attack the Agha Khan it is difficult for me to discover. Perhaps he thinks that the Qadianis and the Ismailis fall under the same category. He is obviously not aware that however the theological interpretation of the Ismailis may err, they beleive in the basic principles of Islam. It is true that they believe in a perpetual *Imamat*; but the *Imam* according to them is not a recipient of Divine revelation. He is only an expounder of the Law. It is only the other day (*vide*, the *Star* of Allahabad, March 12, 1934) that His Highness the Agha Khan addressed his followers as follows:

> Bear witness that Allah is One. Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah. Qaran is the Book of Allah. Ka'ba is the Qibla of all. You are Muslims and should live with Muslims. Greet Muslims with Assalam-o-Alaikum.
>
> Give your children Islamic names. Pray with Muslim congregations in mosques. Keep fast regularly. Solemnize your marriages according to Islamic rules of Nikah. Treat all Muslims as your brothers.

It is for the Pandit now to decide whether the Agha Khan represents the solidarity of Islam or not.

Ahmadis are Traitors

Both To Islam And To India.

(ALLAMA IQBAL'S LETTER TO PANDIT JAWAHAR LAL NEHRO.)

LAHORE

June 21, 1936

My dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

Thank you so much for your letter which I received yesterday. At the time I wrote in reply to your articles I believed that you had no idea of the political attitude of the Ahmadis. Indeed the main reason why I wrote a reply was to show, especially to you, how Muslim loyality had originated and how eventually it had found a revelational basis in Ahmadism. After the publications of my paper I discovered, to my great surprise, that even the educated Muslims had no idea of the historical causes which had shaped the teachings of Ahmadism. Moreover, your Muslim Admirers in the Punjab and elsewhere felt perturbed over your articles as they thought you were in sympathy with the Ahmadiyya movement. This was mainly due to the fact that the Ahmadis were jubilant over your articles. The Ahmadi Press was mainly responsible for the misunderstanding about you. However, I am glad to know that my impression was erroneous. I myself have little interest in theology, but had to dabble in it a bit in order to meet the Ahmadis on their own ground. I assure you that my paper was written with the best intentions for Islam and India. I have no doubt in my mind that the Ahmadis are traitors both to Islam and to India.

I was extremely sorry to miss the opportunity of meeting you in Lahore. I was very ill in those days and could not leave my rooms. For the last two years, I have been living a life practically of retirement on account of continued illness. Do let me know when you come to the Punjab next. Did you receive my letter regarding your proposed Union for Civil Liberties? As you do not acknowledge it in your letter I fear if never reached you.

Yours Sincerely

Muhammad Iqbal

The Iqbalities, in Pakistan have not published this letter in any collection of iqbal's letters which speaks itself about the Ahmadis effects.

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This letter has been copied from a book "A BUNCH OF OLD LETTERS" published by Asia Publishing House, Bombay, Culcutta, New Delhi, Madras.